

# Tordena Not 90 Report for Camino Squad

## On the Map!

By HENRY BURKE  
Press-Herald Sports Editor

When a "junior" baseball team competes for a national championship, press coverage usually extends across the land. Such was the case of the Connie Mack League national playoffs held last week in Farmington, New Mexico.

Stories of the tournament were carried daily by the press in the East and it was easy to follow the progress of the Tordena Bullets who eventually won the title.

But where is Tordena, California? It runs somewhere along the white line at the intersection of Western Avenue and Redondo Beach Blvd. Tordena is makeshift designation for Torrance and Gardena, and somehow detracts from overwhelming the Chamber of Commerce of either community.

A Connie Mack team is usually the product of outstanding 17 and 18-year-old players from five nearby high schools and it is difficult to give credit to one township.

Bob Prior, head man with the Bullets, is an old-timer in the North Torrance-Gardena area and it was a natural thing for him to favor the monicker Tordena. As a result when the team arrived home from Farmington, a hometown greeting was limited to sweethearts of the players.

The "teenagers" who make up the Tordena Bullets are graduates and upcoming seniors from Gardena High, North High, West High, Rolling Hills and Loyola High.

Inasmuch as the Bullets won the national championship for the first time in the summer of 1964 it took a little lustre away from the current repeat. But considering there are about 1,100 Connie Mack teams in the country, victory is quite an accomplishment.

The Bullets won the double elimination tournament the hard way, losing a first round game and winning five straight via losers' bracket.

The final two victories were 13-12 and 10-0 against the Toledo, Ohio, team that beat them in the first round, 7-5.

Counting the local sectional (Southern California) and regional playoffs (at Porterville), the Bullets won a combined 14 victories against one loss.

Sandwiched among the Toledo victories in the nationals were a 3-0 win over host Farmington; 1-0 over Fort Worth, Texas; and 4-3 over Des Moines, Iowa, in 13 innings.

Other teams ousted from contention along the way were Islip, New York; Seattle Washington; and Pensacola, Florida.

Since the host automatically participates in the tournament, Farmington was knocked out of the running in its first two games. But Bob Prior says Farmington is a great baseball town. The popular of the city is 25,000 and it has nine lighted ballparks.

Each game was given radio coverage and only the finals were blacked out on local TV.

Financially, the entire tournament came out in the black. Prior said the entire community treated the tournament with sensation and the hospitality was "out of this world."

Each team was given a particular sponsoring group. The Bullets' "uncle" was the American Petroleum Institute and Prior said it was a marvelous relationship.

Farmington has an elevation of 5,600 which presented two problems. The players had trouble breathing and the pitchers had trouble throwing their curveballs.

Prior went to the API to acquire oxygen tanks for the players and the pitching problems was resolved by employing pitchers who relied most effectively on fastballs. The pitching of Gary Ryerson, Bruce McCormick and Bruce Wade is just what the doctor ordered.

One of the more delightful gymnicks of the tournament was the assignment of a princess to each team. The girl whose team became the champion reigned at a championship dinner dance. Sandy Douglas, 17, was the lass honored by the Tordena triumph.

How much Sandy inspired the Bullets to their championship is unknown, but Manager Prior is convinced the team did not have nearly as much team spirit at the start of the campaign as the final stages.

"The kids didn't seem to have the sparkling attitude of the '64 club to start with, but when they began to understand team rules and curfew and saw the light, it was an encouraging sign," said the manager.

The team also took up a battle cry of calling each other "ABBOTT" on and off the field. Prior says there was a wishing well in front of the motel and the boys never went without tossing a coin in it.

A similarity between both the '64 and '66 ball clubs is they both finished second to the Torrance Red Devils in South Bay Conference play, a strange circumstance.

Each Connie Mack League team finances its own program, a cost of between \$1,000 and \$1,500 a year. Backers of the Bullets are Red Devil Fireworks, Mrs. Hazel Anderson whose husband Dr. Wayne Anderson is with the Dodgers organization, and Independent Building Materials.

The '64 trip to the national playoffs in Springfield, Ill., resulted in a deficit of \$1,000. The last of it was paid off in May from the proceeds of a pancake breakfast.

Bob Prior, 41, a plant engineer at Pacific Telephone is originally from Morristown, New York, and got his initiation as coach with a local Babe Ruth League. His brother, Bill, is business manager for the Bullets and Al Egnatuk and Mills Barnes are coaches.

Bob's son, Gary Prior, 14, is a freshman at North High and a fine baseball prospect. A daughter, Nancy, is courted by a former member of the team, George Carr.

Bruce Wade of North High is the only player with both national championships. Eligible next year are Darrell Blore of Rolling Hills, Larry Bruce and Gary Wedel of Gardena, and Mike Barnes, Ken Stuler and Jeff Osborn from the North High clan. And you can bet Bob Prior will be back again as the manager.

## Blades Await Camp

Twenty-one players have been invited to attend the Los Angeles Blades' hockey training camp which opens Monday, Sept. 19, at the Olympic Ice Rink in Harbor City.

General Manager - Coach Ferry Flaman plans twice daily drills for the first two weeks, punctuated by a tentatively-scheduled trip north for a pair of exhibition games against WHL foes prior to the Chicago clash.

The training camp in Harbor City will be the first operated in Southern California by a professional hockey club.

Heading the list of returnees is Center Norm Johnson, a three-year Blade veteran who led the club in scoring last year with 77 points.

The invitees include 12 professionals and nine amateurs, as follows:

Goalies — Jack Norris and Marcel Pelletier, Amateurs—Jim Coombs and Jerry Randall.

Forwards — Norm Johnson, Bob Schmutz, Marc Boileau, Bill Orban, Buddy Boone, Willie O'Ree, Amateurs—George Agar, Jr., Ted McCaskill, Daniel LeBlanc and Jack Gibson.

Defensemnen — Jerry Topazzini, Howie Young, Jack Hendrickson, Amateurs—Andre Dubuc and Norm Ryder.

## Swimmers Set Mark In Relay

Competing in the Santa Monica Freestyle and Relay Swim Championships, members of a Torrance relay team set a record of 2:13.5 in the 200 yard novice freestyle.

Lynn Percy, Marleen Muslim, Bonnie Katayama and Cheri Clements also won second place in the 100 yard medley relay with a time of 1:09.2.

Torrance swimmer Vic Katayama won first place in the 9 to 10-year-old boys division 50 yard freestyle in 33.5. Cheri Clements placed third in the 50 yard freestyle with 32.1.

The NCAA cross country championship originated at Michigan State in 1938 and was run there every year through 1964.



**DOWN TO BUSINESS . . .** Two-day football workouts got under way at El Camino College Thursday. Posing with a smile at the start of his fifth year as head coach of the Warriors is Ken Swearingen, a product of the college. In the background, prospective linemen are put through the task of pushing around the iron horse. The Warriors scrimmage the alumni Sept. 10. (Press-Herald Photo)

## Heavy Drills Begin

While Torrance's five high schools get ready for their first week of contact football, El Camino College has put in three double sessions to date. If the Warriors do anything in the Metropolitan Conference this year, they will have to make it without a break-away threat.

Coach Ken Swearingen said, "If we had somebody like Sam Gipson in our backfield, I would be completely satisfied, but we don't seem to have that type of back."

Gipson is the open field runner from Banning who put on a dazzling show in the Lions East-West game at El Camion stadium a few weeks ago. Among the schools which claim to have landed Gipson is Harbor JC. Bill Tapp and Lloyd Miller of Palos Verdes' CIF championship club are listed there too.

Garry Billotti, another member of the P. V. backfield, moved into Camionland and is one of a half dozen fine offensive candidates. Others include Greg Runnals of Aviation, Steve Schmitz of North, and Mike Fitzgerald of Redondo who is a sophomore at El Camion.

Among the 90 boys reporting to El Camino are 15 returning lettermen. Most are defensive specialists.

Letterman Bob Quarry of North and Dana Clyde, Redondo all Bay Leaguer, are the two quarterback prospects.

Two morning sessions are held at El Camion, splitting up veterans and newcomers. The evening workout is for everyone.

Wasting little time in making up the Warriors' top prospects, the coaching staff has scheduled a scrimmage against Riverside before the end of the week.

## Speed Is Not Essential For Pro Pass Receivers

Tommy McDonald has a big gripe — and it is a major reason the bouncing Ram Flanker is off to the finest start of his pro career.

"I'm getting tired of reading and hearing that the Rams lack speed in their pass receivers. It just aggravated me, as if you can only survive if you have great speed."

"Nobody ever called Ray Berry a speedster, but he's the league's all-time best pass catcher. Tom Fears wasn't real fast, yet he grabbed more passes than any other Ram."

"It takes more than speed. Look at the New York Giants when they were winning season after season in the Eastern Division. Sure, they had Del Shofner, but they also had Kyle Rote, who sure wasn't the fastest man in the league, and Frank Gifford who turned to pass receiving after he was through as a halfback, and Alex Webster, one of the slowest runners around."

"Paul Hornung and Jim Taylor wouldn't win many sprint races, but the Packers keep winning with 'em. I remember in last year's championship game when Hornung was caught once from behind by Cleveland's Jim Houston, a 240-pound linebacker."

"The Colts, except for Lenny Moore, never had much speed. Jimmy Orr isn't fast, but to me he's one of the league's finest flankers."

"And I remember 1960, when I was with the Philadelphia Eagles and we won the title. Billy Barnes did most of our running and he didn't have any speed at all. People used to think I was real fast because I was catching the big bomb. The programs said I ran 9.8 in college. I never did that in my life. I won the 100-yard dash in the high school state meet one year, but I did it in 10 seconds."

"Why, Jerry Tubbs, a line-backer, could outrun me when I was playing for Oklahoma, and I remember once

with the Eagles when Dale Meinert, a Cardinal line-backer, caught me from behind. "I never relied just on speed. The halfbacks never play me 12 or 14 yards back like they do most flankers. It's been 8 to 10 yards ever since I've been in the league. So I have always worked on my moves. I try to convince the defender I'm going one way, then I go another I know I can't blow by anybody."

"But it just hits a sore spot to keep hearing the Rams don't have any speed. I'd like to show those guys that running 40 yards in 4.5 or 4.6 doesn't make you the greatest receiver in the world."

Tommy's determination to prove a point, plus his never-flagging enthusiasm, may take him to his greatest season in 10 years of pro playing. His present pre-season pace of nearly nine catches a game is almost double that of 1965 when he snagged 67 in the league race to finish second in the NFL.

## Stock Cars, Figure 8's Paired Tonight

More than 200 laps of stock car racing is slated for tonight's doubleheader program of NASCAR Late Model and ARA Figure 8 Stock Car racing at Gardena's Ascot Park.

One hundred cars and drivers are entered for the twin bill of racing. Some thirty 1966-65-64 model new cars will take part in the 100-lap NASCAR Late Model Stock Car feature.

## PLAYERS SOUGHT FOR ALUMNI GAME

Former El Camino College football lettermen interested in playing in the annual alumni scrimmage Sept. 10 are asked to report immediately.

Ricardo Real, secretary-treasurer of the ECC Football Alumni Association, is handling the alumni roster.

The alumni-varsity clash is a traditional season-opener, even though not officially a game. No records are kept and the score is not recorded.

In order to participate in the classic, alumni must have earned either a varsity or junior varsity letter in football at El Camino, and be a paid-up member of the 1966 Alumni Association.

## Tordena Bullets: Connie Mack Kings



**CONNIE MACK CHAMPIONS . . .** Victorious in last week's Connie Mack National Championships at Farmington, New Mexico, were the Tordena Bullets. Members of the triumphant team are: (first row) Mike Barnes, Ken Stuler, Gary Wedel, Daryl Blore, Larry

Burch, Mike Tuffley, and Jerry Stuler, bathoy; (second row) Russ Brand, Bruce Wade, Barry Kubishta, Jeff Osborn, Steve Shibley, Bill Barnett, Dave LaRoche, Bruce Cooke, Dave McCormick, Gary Ryerson, Bill Prior, Chris Krogh, Mills Barnes, and Bob Prior.